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City Hall bike paths vs parking protest

The Coalition for Democracy Montréal is fundraising for legal action to obtain an injunction halting the City of Montreal's plans to continue putting in bike paths without public consultations. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)



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Canada Post strike

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VSPE Borough Mayor's callous response comes back to haunt her

Parc Ex parking/bike path critics turn 'Arrangez-vous' into a rallying cry

MARTIN C. BARRY
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"Arrangez-vous."
For some VSPE residents, that two-word phrase – uttered by Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc Extension Borough Mayor Laurence Lavigne-Lalonde at a borough council meeting while responding to a Querbes Ave. resident's complaint about intrusive bike paths and lost street parking – has been turned into a rallying cry.

A crowd of more than 50 people gathered outside Montreal City Hall just before the city council meeting last week to focus attention on their opposition to the Projet Montréal administration's continuing implementation of an agenda that prioritizes the creation of new bike paths while simultaneously eliminating car parking.

Hitting a nerve in Parc Ex

In Montreal's Parc Extension district, where finding a parking spot was difficult long before Projet Montréal came into office seven years ago at Montreal City Hall, Mayor Valérie Plante's narrow pursuit of a pro-bike, pro-pedestrian, anti-car agenda has hit an especially painful nerve.

"I am one of the people who were tremendously affected with their health," said Palagiotis Hatzipetros, a Querbes Ave. resident. He was one of several Parc Exers who turned out to express their feelings about the measures.

"I need and rely on my vehicle nowadays," he said. "We were never consulted – never asked – whether we were residents, cyclists in the area or business owners or service providers. Nobody came to consult with the population of Parc Extension. Just like they didn't consult any of the population in the Montreal area."

'Arrangez-vous' weaponized

He called it "undemocratic and unacceptable" that without proper consultation "our democratic rights are trampled upon for the ideologies and beliefs of the few who have a vested interest..."

Helen Papathanasopoulos, a longtime Ogilvy Ave. business owner, roused the crowd into a



Longtime Ogilvy Ave. business owner Helen Papathanasopoulos turned VSPE borough mayor Laurence Lavigne-Lalonde's "Arrangez-vous" response into a rallying cry for a movement seeking to revise the City of Montreal's one-size-fits-all approach for creating bike paths while eliminating street parking. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

chant of "Arrangez-vous" as she recalled the borough mayor's callous response during a borough council meeting to a woman whose family lives on Querbes who complained the borough was making it impossible for them to live.

"We're fed up," said Papathanasopoulos. "We've been asking for consultations. Nothing. We went door-to-door collecting signatures. Nothing. We did demonstrations. Nothing. We had to get organized." She said she and a few other supporters finally decided it was time to take off the gloves and get serious with a new approach involving lawyers.

Planned Legal challenge

The rally was organized by the Coalition for Democracy Montréal, an organization that has obtained a charter from Quebec's Registre des entreprises (the province's business and enter-

prise registry) as a non-profit group.

The coalition is currently in the midst of a fundraising campaign to pay the legal costs

for obtaining an injunction against the City of Montreal's being able to continue putting in the bike path network without "proper consultation," according to the coalition's website. As of November 3, the campaign had raised nearly \$32,000.

According to a statement issued by the group last week, CDM has mandated the Bergman & Associates law firm "to seek the appropriate court orders arguing that residents, homeowners, business owners, institutions, employees and community groups are harmed by bike paths imposed by municipal administrations, with damage to quality life, financial impacts, lack of consultation and more."

Disregard for impact

The court order being sought will be directed against the City of Montreal and the borough of Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension, "and any borough where similar developments negatively impact citizens with the center city's imprimatur and financing," the CDM says.

"Paths ostensibly meant to secure active transit, have been imposed on communities without regard to their true impact," claims the CDM's statement. CDM spokesperson Marc Perez said a good deal of the support has come from merchants seeing the impact of bike paths on their businesses and their neighbours – whether in Parc Extension or across the island of Montreal – wherever bike paths have been implemented by the city.



Palagiotis Hatzipetros of Parc Extension's Querbes Ave. was one of several speakers who recounted the impact that the removal of parking on the street has had on their lives. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

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OPINION & Editorial



What does Trump's win mean for Canada's left-wing parties?

The Democratic Party's loss underscores the cost of ignoring voters. Will Canada's left-wing parties heed the lesson?

The recent U.S. presidential election offers valuable lessons for Canadian politicians.

Donald Trump's victory was less about a surge in his popularity than it was about Democratic voters – frustrated with a party they felt no longer represented their concerns – staying home.

For Canada's political leaders, especially those on the left, this is a reminder of what can happen when a party loses touch with its base.

First, we need to look at the numbers: Kamala Harris received significantly fewer votes than Joe Biden did in 2020, while Trump's support remained mostly stable. This tells us two things: first, many Democratic Party supporters chose not to vote; and second, Trump didn't so much win as the Democrats lost.

The lesson for Canada's left-wing parties is clear: failing to reflect voter priorities opens the door to opponents gaining ground with minimal effort.

The underlying issue isn't new. For years, advocates of New Deal-style policies warned that corporate-leaning Democratic elites were losing the support of ordinary Americans. High-profile Democrats like Hillary and Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, often seen as representative of that corporate-friendly wing, only deepened this divide. Progressive

leader Ralph Nader, who was scapegoated by the corporate media for Al Gore's 2000 presidential loss to Republican George Bush when he ran as the Green Party candidate, has been urging the Democrats to change course. Nader believes that voters are sending a clear message to the Democrats, telling them, "We're sick of throwaway lines. We're sick of not having the government return the benefits of massive taxation to us ... All we hear about is empire abroad. All we hear about is more military budgets by the Democrats and the Republicans in Congress, giving the generals more than they ask for, eating the public budgets that should be providing public services and public infrastructure in communities all over the country, creating key jobs."

This disconnect left voters vulnerable to Trump's populist appeal.

So, what does all this mean for Canada? For the Conservative Party, which shares much with the U.S. Republicans in policy and style, the next federal election likely feels well within reach. But Conservatives should remember there's a difference between staying true to their base and dismissing everyone outside it. Many Canadians have experienced this in dealing with the Conservative response to key issues, such as the crisis in the Middle East, where differ-

ing opinions are often ignored. The Democrats' experience shows that ignoring broader voter concerns can have serious repercussions.

For Canada's left-wing parties, the U.S. election is an opportunity to recalibrate. Nader's advice to truly listen to the electorate applies here, too. Though polling on current issues is limited, a 2020 EKOS poll revealed strong support for sanctions against Israel among NDP, Green, Bloc, and Liberal supporters. Given recent events, it's likely that most Canadians (apart from core Conservatives) favour policies that promote peace and accountability. Parties willing to take a stand on these issues – and show genuine responsiveness to voter concerns – may find new levels of support, particularly from younger generations.

The choices made by Canadian leaders today will shape the country's future direction. Will they draw lessons from the Democrats' setback and pursue a more connected, collaborative approach? Or will Canada's political landscape continue drifting toward the pitfalls seen in U.S. politics?

That answer is yet to be determined, but taking heed of recent events south of the border could help guide Canada's path forward.

Gerry Chidiac

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Breaking Barriers in Parc-Extension: How Quebec's New Abortion Access Plan Empowers Diverse Communities



Marine Biron: Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

DIMITRIS ILIAS

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Quebec's unveiling of its first-ever action plan to improve abortion access on November 19, 2024, resonates strongly with communities

like Parc-Extension, where diverse populations often face unique challenges in accessing healthcare. This initiative not only seeks to address systemic barriers but also aims to ensure that no region or demographic is left behind in the pursuit of reproductive justice. Parc-Extension, known for its vibrant multicultural population, is

home to many individuals who may already experience disparities in accessing healthcare services due to language barriers, cultural stigmas, or financial constraints. Quebec's plan to expand mobile clinics and telemedicine services could significantly impact neighbourhoods like this, where resources are often stretched thin, and traveling to distant healthcare facilities poses a challenge for many.

Another critical aspect of the action plan that could resonate with Parc-Extension residents is the emphasis on eliminating stigma. In diverse communities where traditional views on abortion may still dominate, the government's public awareness campaign is expected to provide culturally sensitive education, fostering an environment where individuals feel safe and supported in making decisions about their reproductive health.

For many women in neighbourhoods like Parc-Extension, accessing abortion services can also be hindered by economic barriers. The government's commitment to increasing funding for clinics and ensuring equitable access across socio-economic lines could provide much-needed relief for those navigating financial hardship.

Additionally, the focus on training healthcare providers to offer accessible and culturally competent care may bring about lasting improvements in how communities like Parc-Extension experience reproductive health services. With increased training and support, local clinics may become better equipped to address the unique needs of the area's residents, bridging gaps in trust and understanding.

As Quebec moves forward with its historic action plan, neighbourhoods like Parc-Extension stand to benefit from a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system. This initiative not only ensures that reproductive rights are safeguarded but also emphasizes the importance of tailoring solutions to the realities of Quebec's most diverse and underserved communities.






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Parc-Extension's Parking Troubles Escalate as Legal Action Challenges Montreal's Bike Path Policies

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The parking saga in Parc-Extension, which our newspaper has extensively covered over the years, is evolving into a city-wide controversy. What began as a localized issue in this densely populated neighbourhood is now expanding into other boroughs, drawing greater attention and sparking broader disputes over urban planning and accessibility.

The Coalition for Democracy Montreal (CDM) has taken legal action against the City of Montreal, targeting the removal of parking spaces to make way for bike paths. Parc-Extension, particularly along Querbes Avenue, has been at the center of the controversy, with residents and businesses voicing frustration over the disruption to their daily lives. Now, similar complaints are emerging in boroughs such as Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Ahuntsic-Cartierville, and Lachine, signaling that the problem is no longer confined to one neighbourhood.

A growing struggle

For years, Parc-Extension residents and businesses have faced mounting challenges with parking, compounded by the city's decisions to prioritize bike path expansions. The elimination of parking spaces has led to significant hardship, with locals forced to spend extended periods searching for available spots. Many have resorted to parking illegally, resulting in a rise in fines and increased stress.

Now, as other boroughs experience similar measures, the parking crisis is amplifying. The CDM claims the city's actions are negatively affecting accessibility, disrupting traffic flow, and placing undue strain on communities that rely on street parking for both residential and commercial needs.

Economic and social fallout

Businesses across the affected boroughs report declines in customer visits, which they attribute to limited parking access. Residents, particularly those with irregular work schedules or physical

mobility challenges, are finding it increasingly difficult to navigate their neighbourhoods. The ripple effect of these policies is being felt city-wide, exacerbating tensions between the city administration and its constituents.

Legal action and grassroots efforts

The CDM, representing concerned citizens and business owners, has turned to the courts as a last resort. While the group has raised \$32,000 through community donations, it still requires an additional \$28,000 to fund its legal case. This legal action marks a significant escalation in what has been a long-standing issue, as residents across Montreal rally to challenge the city's approach to bike path implementation.

A debate over priorities

As the saga grows beyond Parc-Extension, it highlights a broader debate over urban planning in Montreal. Supporters of the bike paths argue that these measures are necessary to promote sustainability and reduce reliance on cars, especially in light of climate change. However, critics contend that the city's policies fail to adequately balance the needs of all residents, particularly in high-density areas where parking is already limited.

For many in Parc-Extension, the issue has become symbolic of the city's inability to consider the practical realities of urban living. What started as a local frustration is now a city-wide flashpoint, with other boroughs echoing the concerns first raised by Parc-Extension residents.

An ongoing saga

Our newspaper has documented the challenges faced by Parc-Extension residents for years, and it is clear that these issues are not going away. Instead, they are growing in scope and intensity, drawing in new voices from across Montreal. As the legal battle unfolds, the question remains: can the city find a way to balance sustainability goals with the daily needs of its residents, or will the parking saga continue to fuel division and unrest?



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The Coalition for Democracy Montreal proceeds with legal action against city

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The Coalition for Democracy Montreal/Coalition pour la Démocratie Montréal is proceeding with its legal case to halt the imposition of bike paths that negatively impact communities.

The non-profit organization wants to stop these schemes in multiple boroughs and neighbourhoods beginning with Parc-Extension, where among other things, hundreds of much-needed parking spaces along Querbes Avenue were eliminated, negatively impacting local residents and businesses, said CDM director Marc Perez. "Enough is enough. It's beyond time to act."

"The Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension administration and similar Projet Montréal administrations, including Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Lachine and others, continue to upend traffic patterns, neighbourhoods and peoples' daily lives using flawed studies," says Perez, "forgoing meaningful public consultation, and failing to truly recognize valid concerns of many who actually support bike paths developed in responsible fashion."

The CDM is mandating the Bergman & Associates law firm to seek the appropriate court orders arguing that residents, homeowners, business owners, institutions, employees and community groups are harmed by bike paths imposed by municipal administrations, with damage to quality life, financial impacts, lack of consultation and more.

The court orders sought will be directed against the City of Montreal and the borough of Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension, and any borough where similar developments negatively impact citizens with the center city's imprimatur and financing. Paths ostensibly meant to secure active transit, have been imposed on communities without regard to their true impact, say critics. "We started local and now citizens from other boroughs are joining in."

After a year-long grassroots fundraising effort, the CDM collected \$32,000 in donations from residents and merchants, an important milestone says director Sia Spanoudakis. "It is time for the residents



to be heard. This is indeed a proud moment!"

CDM director Maria Pantelopoulos says court action is a last resort to force individual borough administrations and the center city to listen to residents impacted by removal of street parking in a high-density district with few private parking options. "Young families with children, night workers, the elderly and handicapped have been forced to make all the compromises for the four-season bike paths used by few cyclists since their implementation. Unless we act, the city will keep removing more parking in this district, either by adding more bike paths or Bixi bike stands."

Perez says much support comes from concerned merchants seeing

the impact of bike paths on their businesses, their neighbours — nearby and across the island — and wherever they are imposed. "Whether they just opened yesterday, are newcomers to Canada, or have been operating for generations, livelihoods are threatened by these decisions."

CDM volunteer Peter Hatzipetros says raising \$32,000 "has been a testament to the strength and unity of our community. It astounds me that we've had to go to such lengths to protect our safety, lives, and livelihoods. Our next step is clear: we're committed to holding the city accountable and ensuring that our voices are not just heard but acted upon."



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Greening Urban Spaces: The Second Chapter of Bye Bye Béton! in VSP

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The *Bye Bye Béton!* initiative, which launched in Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension (VSP) in 2024, is returning for its second year. This program, which focuses on urban greening and collective efforts to reduce concrete surfaces, aims to build on the successes of its inaugural projects. Residents and organizations in VSP are invited to submit their ideas for transforming paved spaces into greener, more community-oriented environments by January 13, 2025.

Building momentum from the first edition

In its first year, *Bye Bye Béton!* led to the transformation of several key areas in VSP, including Triangle Ball and Les Jardins Talon. These projects not only introduced much-needed vegetation to heavily paved urban areas but also created vibrant spaces that encourage community engagement and environmental sustainability.

The program's approach, centered on collective action and grassroots participation, demonstrated its potential to address issues like urban heat islands while fostering social connection. By inviting proposals from both individuals and groups, the initiative ensured that the changes reflected the needs and aspirations of the people directly affected.

A collaborative vision for urban renewal

The second edition of *Bye Bye Béton!* continues to encourage collaboration between citizens, organizations, and the borough's administration. Projects can focus on either municipally owned properties, such as cultural or sports facilities, or non-municipal spaces with collective purposes, such as daycare courtyards or cooperative housing areas.

This inclusive framework underscores the program's goal of turning underused spaces into assets for the community. By working with partners such as the Centre d'écologie urbaine and Ville en vert, the initiative integrates expertise in urban planning and ecological

design, ensuring that projects are both practical and impactful.

A response to urban challenges

Montreal, like many cities, faces the environmental and social challenges of urbanization, including heat islands, limited green spaces, and the effects of climate change. Programs like *Bye Bye Béton!* represent an innovative approach to addressing these issues, using small-scale, localized projects to create cumulative impact across a borough.

In addition to environmental benefits, the program highlights the importance of shared green spaces in fostering community interaction and improving quality of life. The emphasis on collective action reflects a broader recognition of the role residents and

workers play in shaping the urban landscape.

Looking ahead

An information session scheduled for December 11, 2024, will provide insights into the application process and share examples from the first edition. This event will help guide those interested in contributing to this year's projects.

The second edition of *Bye Bye Béton!* promises to build on its early success, offering a platform for innovative urban greening and community-driven development. As the program evolves, it continues to serve as a model for participatory environmental initiatives, demonstrating the transformative potential of collective action in urban settings.



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Canada Post strike creates uncertainty for small business before holidays, CFIB says

Nearly 80% of small enterprises rely on Canada Post to do business, according to federation

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Nearly a week into the Canada Post strike, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) says it is disappointed by the work stoppage's impact on small businesses and it is urging Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) to quickly come to an agreement to avoid further disruption as the country heads into the holiday shopping season.

According to CFIB spokesperson Dariya Baiguzhiyeva, three quarters of Canada's small firms say they stand to be negatively affected by the work stoppage, particularly with challenges to cash flow due to delayed invoices and cheques and higher cost delivery alternatives.

Small business suffering

The CFIB is urging Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) to quickly come to an agreement.

"While many Canadians may not depend on Canada Post as much as they once did, small businesses often rely on the postal system to ship goods, send marketing materials to consumers, send invoices and receive payments from suppliers and business customers," the CFIB said in a statement.

"With the critical holiday shopping season around the corner and limited alternatives in many parts of Canada, avoiding a postal disruption is important," the federation said.

They depend on Canada Post

According to a recent CFIB Flash Survey (Impact of Work Stoppages), a strong majority (79%) of small businesses rely on Canada Post services to do business.

Three quarters (75%) of small firms said they will be negatively affected by a work stoppage, particularly with challenges to cash flow due to delayed invoices and cheques and higher cost delivery alternatives.

The federation points out that small firms depend on a reliable postal service, and they need mail and parcel delivery service provided by Canada Post to remain fully operational.

"We're asking both parties to negotiate in good faith and reach a quick resolution for the sake of Canadian small businesses and consumers," the CFIB statement continued.

Back-to-work legislation

"And as the federal government has ignored almost every attempt by Canada Post to deal with its unwieldy cost structures, CFIB will call on government to use all its powers (including binding arbitration or back-to-work legislation) to keep the postal system working if negotiations are unsuccessful."

In the online survey, which has been active since November 13, the number of respondents was 1,461. The CFIB says that for comparison purposes, a probability sample with the same number of respondents would have a margin of error of at most +/- 2.6%, 19 times out of 20.



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24 HOUR MONITORING





CFIB spokesperson, Dariya Baiguzhiyeva.

Canadian land border crossings will no longer be open 24 hours in Quebec

Travellers planning to enter Canada by land could bump their noses at a closed door as early as January 6, 2025

(NEWSFIRST) - On Monday, November 18, The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) announced that it intends to adjust hours of service at 35 land ports of entry across Canada as of 12:01 am (local time) on January 6, 2025.

The announcement, determined in collaboration with the United States, will enhance overall security for both countries. It will allow the CBSA to use its resources more efficiently by deploying officers at busier ports of entry. This will support the CBSA's ability to process travellers and goods as well as to manage enforcement activities.

The U.S. is also adjusting service hours at many of its ports of entry. This alignment will also

allow both countries to return inadmissible travellers and goods to the other country, which is more difficult when one side of the border is closed while the other remains open.

These adjustments are based on an analysis of operational pressures, peak periods, and services required at the ports of entry, to minimize the impacts on border communities. Almost all of these ports of entry are processing an average of two or less cars or commercial trucks per hour during the hours that will no longer be in operation, and travellers have an alternative border crossing option within a 100 km radius.

Here are the border crossings whose hours of operation will be modified for travellers as of January 6, 2025:



Chartierville

Currently open to travellers from **8 a.m. to midnight**, 7 days a week
New schedule for passengers: **8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, 7 days a week

Clarenceville

Currently open to travellers from **8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, 7 days a week
New schedule for passengers: **8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**, 7 days a week

Frelighsburg

Currently **open 24 hours** for travellers, 7 days a week
New schedule for passengers: **8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, 7 days a week

Herdman

Currently **open 24 hours** for travellers, 7 days a week
New schedule for travellers: **6 a.m. to 6 p.m.**, 7 days a week

Hereford Road

Currently **open 24 hours** for travellers, 7 days a week
New schedule for passengers: **8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, 7 days a week

Highwater

Currently **open 24 hours** for travellers, 7 days a week
New schedule for passengers: **8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, 7 days a week

Lacolle Route 221

Currently **open 24 hours** for travellers, 7 days a week
New schedule for passengers: **6 a.m. to 10 p.m.**, 7 days a week

Lacolle Route 223

Currently **open 24 hours** for travellers, 7 days a week
New schedule for passengers: **8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, 7 days a week

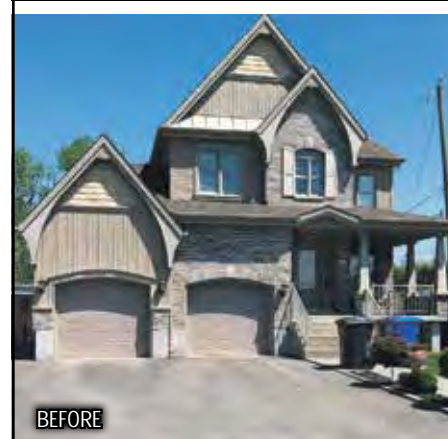
Noyan

Currently **open 24 hours** for travellers, 7 days a week
New schedule for passengers: **8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, 7 days a week

Trout River

Currently **open 24 hours** for travellers, 7 days a week
New schedule for travellers: **6 a.m. to 6 p.m.**, 7 days a week

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New customer service role at CATSA checkpoints



(NEWSFIRST) - Passengers needing assistance now have access to a bilingual resource, across 16 airports nationwide, to help guide them through the security screening process. Introduced by the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) in July 2024, this new position enhances the client experience by ensuring passengers receive barrier-free services at security screening checkpoints.

Primarily located in the queuing area leading to the checkpoint, Facilitators can be easily recognized by their blue vests with “Need Help/Besoin d’Aide” on the back along with the CATSA logo. They are focused on assisting passengers who need additional help navigating the screening process and act as a complement to existing airport services and those of air carriers.

Created as part of new Airport Screening Services Agreements, which came into effect in April this year, this position aligns with CATSA’s Strategic Plan 2024-2029, specifically the Pillar focused on *Elevating the client experience*. By enhancing support for passengers, this role demonstrates CATSA’s commitment to delivering high-quality service and improving the overall checkpoint experience for passengers.

“We have already received very positive feedback on the new position from passengers, airport partners and checkpoint staff” said Nada Semaan, CATSA’s CEO. “These Facilitators are proving to be a valuable resource, ensuring that passengers who need assistance experience a barrier-free, accessible screening process across 16 of Canada’s busiest airports.”

CATSA remains dedicated to security, innovation, and making the passenger experience better for everyone.

The CRA has zero tolerance for fraud

(NEWSFIRST) - Whether it be a threat from external bad actors, or taxpayers willfully submitting fraudulent returns, the CRA is standing on guard.

Protecting taxpayer accounts

In today’s increasingly digital world, safeguarding sensitive information against constantly evolving threats is critical for every organization, including the CRA. The protection of taxpayer information remains one of our highest priorities. Recognizing that even with our robust security controls, we, like many large organizations, are not immune to privacy breaches, and we recognize the worry and frustration this can cause for those affected.

The CRA has a wide array of security measures to protect the personal information of Canadians, and to shutdown would-be fraudsters. That said, bad actors are continually evolving their tactics and so we must be vigilant in adapting to stay one step ahead.

In fact, since 2020, the CRA has implemented numerous security measures, technologies, processes and controls to ensure the security of taxpayer information including multi-factor authentication throughout CRA login services, and proactively revoking user IDs and passwords that may have been obtained by unauthorized third parties through external sources.

We have been successful in protecting hundreds of thousands of fraudulent attempts to gain access to personal and business taxpayer accounts.

When we suspect an account is the target of an external threat

actor, we take swift and immediate precautionary measures on the taxpayer’s account such as locking it to prevent transactions, conducting in-depth reviews, and contacting the individuals. The CRA formally notifies the affected individuals and provides credit protection, where warranted, at no cost to them.

Taxpayers who are confirmed victims of identity theft are not held responsible for any money paid out to scammers nor penalties or interest related to fraudulent claims.

The CRA has processes in place to report all material privacy breaches to Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (OPC).

The CRA is prevented from commenting on taxpayer information obtained from compromised third parties, due to privacy protections found in the Income Tax Act.

Fraudulent tax returns

The vast majority of Canadians are honest, law abiding taxpayers. As such, Canada’s tax system is based on voluntary compliance and self-assessment. Individual taxpayers are responsible for ensuring the information they report on their tax returns is accurate.

Unfortunately, there are those few who believe they are above the rules of society. For that reason, the CRA has strong safeguards in place to catch this small percentage of fraudsters who willfully submit false claims in order to steal funds from the collective purse. Safeguards include automated and manual checks, as well as cooperation with financial institutions, to flag suspicious returns and participants in illegal tax schemes before

funds are distributed.

The CRA does not publicly discuss tax schemes utilized by bad actors, to avoid inspiring other would-be fraudsters from following suit.

Taxpayers who claim false expenses, credits or rebates from the government are subject to serious consequences. They are liable not only for corrections to their tax returns and payment of the full amount of tax owing, but also to penalties and interest. They may also face criminal prosecution.

In rare cases where fraudulent funds are paid out, we take every available enforcement action to return the funds to the Crown and hold the offending parties accountable. This includes criminal investigations that could be referred to the RCMP.

Once convicted, tax evaders can face penalties, court fines, and jail time — in addition to having to pay the taxes they tried to evade, plus interest.



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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

NOT SEAWORTHY

Q I have a question that may be something I alone can answer, but perhaps you can assist. Here's hoping.

I love my boyfriend. He is a wonderful man, with a great heart and soul. No one else could care for me as deeply as he does. We've been together three years, and although marriage has been brought up in passing, we've never discussed it at length. It's reached the point I feel if I am not going to marry him, I should let him go.

He hasn't pressured me, asked about forever, or anything of that nature. But I know if I said today "let's get married," that would be all I needed to say. We have a good give-and-take relationship, but I still wonder: Would it work, would I be happy, would we end up like so many others in a dreadful relationship 20 years down the road?

I look at other men and think what my life might be like if I were with them and consider "trying them out" so to speak. I go back and forth on this and don't know if it's just my young age, 23, the fact that by nature I am indecisive, or if I am, as another of your reader's wrote, only 99% in love with him.

I don't want to wait until there's a big white dress in my closet to realize I'm on the wrong path.

Addie

A Addie, we use the word "love" in this context. Love is what you feel for the one you want to be with for the rest of your life. That word in relationship to anyone else is not love. For example, I love him but he's hitting on my sister, or I love him but I can picture myself with other men, or I love him but anything else... That's not love. It's desperation, wish, hope, desire, innate need, or even a craving to be abused. But it's not love.

How do we know you don't love him? You are already predicting the relationship's demise. You are leaving yourself an out. You've left the hatch on the submarine open. If you marry, expect to hear the rushing of water, the bonging of the alarm, and the cry to abandon ship.

Some research has looked at who fares better in relationships: people who follow their gut feelings, or people who weigh pros and cons. That research tilts in favor of the gut feeling people. They are more likely to stay in a relationship which lasts. Why is that true? You have an emotional stake in your gut. The "reasons" for staying with someone are head stuff. Head stuff can change, and head stuff doesn't involve you personally.

Another way of saying this is Occam's razor. The simplest answer is usually best. There are no extra parts to go wrong. The complicated answer has failure built into it.

Wayne & Tamara

EPILOGUE

Q I appreciate your candid and prompt response. It confirms what I believed to be true. Although I feel pain and sadness for what I have to do, your response gave me the last bit of a push I needed to actually do it. Thank you very much, you are just wonderful!

Addie

A Addie, your feeling of relief proves this is the right decision. Like all good people, you do

Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF (www.yourotherhalf.com)

Send letters to: Direct Answers, PO 964 Springfield, MO 65801-0964

or email: GetInTouch@WayneAndTamara.com

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- Piel de Sapo Melon
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- Broccoli
- Coffee Mushrooms
- Lemons (2)
- Potatoes (~3lbs)
- Garlic
- Bananas (4)
- Clementines (5)
- Mangos (2)
- Limes (2)
- Tomatoes (paquet)
- Red Onions (3)
- Cucumber
- Lettuce
- Avocados (2)
- Blueberries

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Week of NOVEMBER 24 TO 30, 2024

The luckiest signs this week:
SCORPIO, SAGITTARIUS AND CAPRICORN

♈ ARIES
Finding the balance with different aspects of your life can be challenging. However, making a few small adjustments will change everything. When it comes to your health, make sure you get enough sleep to strengthen your immune system.

♉ TAURUS
You may toy with the idea of starting your own business. You'll start to pursue new professional goals and meet new people, which could lead to valuable collaborations in the future.

♊ GEMINI
You'll be in the spotlight this week, whether in front of an audience or on social media. Success is on the horizon! Expect to be recognized and applauded for something.

♋ CANCER
Cleaning your home will help free your mind and eliminate confusion. You may need to assert yourself in a specific situation to maintain control.

♌ LEO
You may receive criticism this week or deal with people who beat around the bush. Be patient and diplomatic to clarify any confusion that arises. Your perseverance will pay off.

♍ VIRGO
You may come into a large sum of money, whether through an insurance claim or inheritance. Be tactful in situations where patience may be running thin.

♎ LIBRA
Positively channel your extra energy by engaging in physical activity. This will keep your spirits up. Having an outlet is essential for your overall well-being.

♏ SCORPIO
Your head will be full of ideas and worries. You may start thinking about a new career path, and opportunities will present themselves. Be open to opportunities for change.

♐ SAGITTARIUS
At work, you may have to serve a crowd or participate in a large event. It can benefit your career and finances, but you must be prepared to handle challenging requests.

♑ CAPRICORN
This time of year sees some businesses facing a period of change. Despite your worries, this situation could work out well for you. You'll move forward while others may leave.

♒ AQUARIUS
You'll be inspired to go on a spontaneous adventure. Pressing matters at home may require your attention. Get ready to spend money on a trip or home improvements.

♓ PISCES
Opposing points of view and unexpected changes may come up. It's important to be patient and determine the best course of action once the situation settles down.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 185

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | |
| 12 | | | | 13 | | | | 14 | | | |
| 15 | | | | 16 | | | | 17 | | | |
| 18 | | | | 19 | | | 20 | 21 | | | |
| | | | | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | | | | |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | | | | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 |
| 34 | | | | 35 | | | | 36 | | | |
| 37 | | | | 38 | | | | 39 | | | |
| | | | | 40 | 41 | | | | | | |
| 42 | 43 | 44 | | | | | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 |
| 50 | | | | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | | 55 | | |
| 56 | | | | 57 | | | | | 58 | | |
| 59 | | | | 60 | | | | | 61 | | |

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ACROSS

- Piercing tools
- Sandal or clog
- Cleopatra's snake
- Breakfast, e.g.
- Chime
- Cold-weather ailment
- Cafe handout
- Share of expenses
- Walking on _____
- Met offering
- A la _____
- Characteristics
- Covers
- Bit of news
- Skunk feature
- That thing's
- Dreadful
- Abominable Snowman
- Cooking container
- Audio system
- Complain
- Wool material

DOWN

- Cast off
- Granny
- Own
- Sick
- Edging
- Tied, as a race
- Kind of shirt
- Give support to
- Midterm, for one
- Bullets, to a GI
- Blubber
- Bowling path
- Garble
- Luxury hotel
- Egg producer
- Cookie grain
- Make a choice
- A long way off
- Narrow cut
- _____ and simple
- Devoured
- Stage whisper
- Pay increase
- Center of worship
- Edition
- Timid
- Song of praise
- Commandment word
- Crunchy
- Peak
- Notable time
- "Three _____ in a tub"
- Field bed
- Ninth's follower
- Coarse sand
- Enrage
- Doing nothing
- Hone
- Roof part
- Dusks
- Auto imperfection
- Exist
- None
- Band equipment

Sudoku

PUZZLE NO. 910

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| | | | | 7 | | 3 | 6 |
| | | | 9 | 5 | | | |
| 2 | 5 | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | 1 | | 4 | |
| | 4 | | | 5 | | | |
| | | 7 | 3 | 9 | | | |
| | | | 1 | 2 | | | |
| 9 | 6 | | | 3 | | 8 | |
| | | 8 | | 6 | | | 5 |

HOW TO PLAY:

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.

Last Issue's Answers

CROSSWORDS

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | W | A | R | M | D | E | B | L | O | T |
| P | A | Y | E | E | O | W | L | O | U | R |
| A | R | E | A | S | L | E | I | G | N | U |
| | | | P | A | U | L | P | R | I | C |
| B | A | G | | R | A | M | | I | C | E |
| E | R | E | | A | G | R | E | E | | |
| D | E | L | U | X | E | | T | R | E | A |
| | | | R | E | N | T | E | R | C | E |
| G | L | E | N | | T | O | | | T | A |
| R | O | A | S | | P | R | E | P | | |
| O | U | T | | A | M | P | | T | A | R |
| U | S | E | | P | A | L | | C | R | E |
| P | E | N | | E | Y | E | | H | E | F |

Sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 7 |
| 9 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| 8 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 3 |
| 7 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 2 |
| 5 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 1 |
| 1 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 9 |
| 3 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 6 |
| 6 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 8 |

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